

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/040,922

Applicant(s)

WEEKS ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Devona E. Faulk

2644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 12/18/2001.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-26.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 28 December 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

42

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Peter Hsieh (Reg. No. 44,780) on 9/21/2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 1, line 9: after the word "level", insert -- at each of said plurality of frequencies --.

Claim 18, line 11: after the word "level", insert -- at each of said plurality of frequencies --.

Claim 19, line 7: after the word "energy", insert -- in each frequency band --.

Claim 26, line 6: after the word "energy", insert -- in each frequency band --.

Reasons For Allowance

2. Claims 1-26 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Art Unit: 2644

Regarding claims 1,17-19, and 26 prior art Aarts, US 6,865,274, discloses a loudspeaker production system having frequency band selective audio power control and teaches of dividing an audio signal input into a plurality of frequency bands and determining a peak value for each band and attenuating based on the audio power. Prior art Kates, US 4,454,609, discloses a speech intelligibility enhancement system which divides a speech signal into a plurality of frequency bands and detecting the envelope characteristics for each band. Prior art Akagiri, US 5,204,677 discloses a quantizing error reducer for an audio signal including taking a sum total of the peak, average or energy of the amplitude of respective amplitude terms every band. Other prior art teaches of automatic gain control. The prior art or combination thereof fails to specifically teach of calculating an average acoustic energy associated with the excess predicted sound pressure level in each frequency band and calculating at least one attenuation factor based on that average acoustic energy associated with the excess predicted sound pressure level and the instantaneous maximum of the excess predicted sound level. As such, the prior art fails to disclose or make obvious the method or apparatus of limiting a signal level in a system having one or more predetermined time and frequency domain dependent limits as claimed.

Art Unit: 2644

Claims 2-16 are allowed due to dependency on claim 1.

Claims 20-25 are allowed due to dependency on claim 19.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Devona E. Faulk whose telephone number is 571-272-7515. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 am - 5 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vivian Chin can be reached on 571-272-7848. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2644

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DEF



VIVIAN CHIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600